

## 2 Samuel 16:15-23 - Thursday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015

- Because it's been a month since we were in 2 Samuel, kindly allow me to refresh our memory concerning what's taking place.
- David and his loyal followers have fled Jerusalem after hearing of David's son Absalom's rebellious plan to kill his own father.
- The reason David runs is that he didn't want innocent lives lost knowing full well it would be a blood bath were he to stay there.

- As an interesting side note, those of us who went to Israel were actually at this very same area that David is fleeing to here.
- The reason I mention that is because seeing the actual area gives you a better idea as to why David would choose that place.
- This because, David knew the area very well, and as such, it would have given him a tremendous advantage over Absalom.

- As he makes his way to this area he's deceived by Ziba concerning Mephibosheth, and falsely accused and cursed by Shimei.
- This is where we left David last time when we got to verse fourteen, he's left Jerusalem and Absalom has arrived in Jerusalem.
- However, what Absalom, and as we'll see, Ahithophel who's with him don't know, is that David has sent spies into their midst.

15 Meanwhile Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem; and Ahithophel was with him. 16 And so it was, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, came to Absalom, that Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!" 17 So Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with your friend?" 18 And Hushai said to Absalom, "No, but whom the LORD and this people and all the men of Israel choose, his I will be, and with him I will remain. 19 "Furthermore, whom should I serve? Should I not serve in the presence of his son? As I have served in your father's presence, so will I be in your presence."

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is the Holy Spirit is giving Hushai the exact words to speak.
- As he's questioned about David, he knows exactly what Absalom wants to hear, which is why he says, "Long live the king!"
- Lest you think Hushai is lying by saying this, you may wish to consider that he never once said long live Absalom as the king.

- The fact of the matter is Hushai is loyal to David and a spy for David, and as far as he's concerned, the Lord has chosen David.
- Actually, this is why he tells Absalom that "whom the Lord and this people and all the men of Israel choose, his he will remain."
- In other words, Hushai is confident that the Lord has not chosen Absalom and knows it's a matter of time before David is back.

20 Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give advice as to what we should do." 21 And Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go in to your father's concubines, whom he has left to keep the house; and all Israel will hear that you are abhorred by your father. Then the hands of all who are with you will be strong."

- What Ahithophel advises Absalom to do here is birthed out of his bitter desire for revenge against David for what he did to him.
- Namely, committing adultery with his granddaughter Bathsheba, then having her husband Uriah the Hittite, no less, murdered.
- Suffice it to say, this is what happens to a man of God, such as Ahithophel was, when he lets a root of bitterness destroy him.

Hebrews 12:15 (NIV) — 15 See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

- It's important to understand that Ahithophel still possesses profound wisdom, however, his wisdom is as worldly as it is wicked.
- Let me explain, advising Absalom to basically rape his father's concubines in public, is to burn all the bridges of reconciliation.
- By that I mean those who have betrayed David and followed Absalom won't have to worry about being killed if they reconciled.

Of this one quoted the Puritan commentator John Trapp who wrote of Ahithophel's tongue, which gave this wicked advice: "O tongue worthy to have been cut out, shred in gobbets and driven down the throat of him that thus misused him, to the engaging of Absalom in such an unpardonable villainy, beside hazard of his immortal soul!"

- Truth be made known, Ahithophel isn't just wanting to get even with David in his vengeance, he wants it to be ten times more.
- Actually this is why in the Law of Moses the command was an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, not ten teeth for one tooth.
- Again, this is why bitterness is so dangerous and even deadly; it drives those given over to it to do unthinkable and cruel acts.

One commentator said it this way, "This shows the power of bitterness. Ahithophel was willing to see these women abused, Absalom grievously sin, and the kingdom of Israel suffer greatly—all simply to satisfy his bitter longing for revenge.

22 So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the top of the house, and Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. 23 Now the advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, was as if one had inquired at the oracle of God. So was all the advice of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.

- Couple of thoughts here on this grievous passage, the first of which has to do with the reason Absalom would actually do this.
- Here's what I'm thinking, he too is bitter towards David, even as his own father, but for different reasons than Ahithophel is.
- For Ahithophel, bitter revenge was for what David did do whereas Absalom's bitter revenge has to do with what David didn't do.

- For Absalom, his bitterness grew over the years because his father didn't do anything about Amnon raping his sister Tamar.
- While this certainly doesn't excuse Absalom, it may in some way explain why Absalom would mete out revenge and kill him.
- By the way, Absalom is just as guilty of murder as David was, and perhaps even more so, however, David repented of his sin.

- Here's where I'm going with this, Absalom isn't only a murderer more so than his father, so too is he also more so an adulterer.
- I would suggest just as David's repentance led to his righteousness, Absalom's unwillingness to repent led to his wickedness.
- I'll take it a step further and also suggest that the reason Absalom would never repent was because he was given over to pride.

Adam Clarke of this wrote, "Every part of the conduct of Absalom shows him to have been a most decadent young man; he was proud, vindictive, adulterous, incestuous, a parricide (which is the killing of a parent), and in fine, reprobate to every good word and work."

- While this speaks to Absalom's evil heart, I can't help but think more of the evil that has filled the heart of Ahithophel as well.
- I find it interesting the Holy Spirit would deem it necessary to include the detail we're given in verse 23 concerning Ahithophel.
- We're told Ahithophel's advice was as if one had inquired at the oracle of God, meaning as close as if it were directly from God.

- As hard as this may be to believe, I'm of the opinion that even this, as unspeakable as it is, came directly from God to Ahithophel.
- Here's why, about a year after David committed adultery with Bathsheba, and murdered Uriah, Nathan prophesied this to him.
- In other words, David knew that God would allow all of this to happen to him because of what he had done as a result of his sin.

2 Samuel 12:10-12 - 10 Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' 11 Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. 12 For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.' "

- The reason I point this out is that even though God is a merciful and gracious God, secret sins may have open consequences.
- Because David had sought to cover it up for as long as he did to keep it a secret, God deemed it necessary to do it this way.
- However, to David's credit his godly sorrow does lead to a genuine repentance, such that, he never sins like this ever again.

2 Corinthians 7:10 (NIV) — 10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

1 John 1:9 (NIV) — 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Proverbs 28:13 (NKJV) — 13 He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.

- We get a glimpse into the heart of David during this time by way of Psalm 51 in which David very candidly begs, God for mercy.
- Actually, this is how I would like to bring tonight's Bible study to a close. Perhaps you'll indulge me as I read Psalm fifty-one.
- The reason being is that David was restored and blessed exceedingly beyond what he could've imagined because he repented.

Psalm 51 (NKJV) — To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David When Nathan the Prophet Went to Him, After He Had Gone in to Bathsheba. 1 Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me. 4 Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight— That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge. 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. 6 Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom. 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may rejoice. 9 Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities. 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You. 14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. 15 O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise. 16 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise. 18 Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. 19 Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, With burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.